Duty Free Import of Pulses

7648. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state : (a) whether Government have any proposal to allow duty free import of pulses;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have made any assessment of impact of import of pulses on domestic prices?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b). There is no proposal to allow import of duty free pulses.

(c) The Government has been monitoring the prices of pulses on continuous basis. Because of a gap of about 2 to 3 million tonnes in domestic demand and supply, import of pulses has been placed on OGL with 10 per cent custom duty. The imports of pulses in the last three years is of the order of 4 to 6 lakh tonnes per year.

Rise in price of sugar

7649. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 5132 given in the Rajya Sabha on 8th May, 1995 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the price of sugar in the market has soared high and there is delay and inadequate supply of sugar for distribution through public distribution system outlets in the country;

(b) whether Government have taken any measures to take care of these two issues before allowing export of sugar and steps taken in this regard; and

(c) what are the other reasons for allowing exports of sugar?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The price of sugar in the open market have remained stable. During the month of May, 1995 (upto 22nd May, 1995); the range of wholesale prices of sugar was Rs. 1128—1360 per quintal in the four principal markets of the country. Allocations of levy sugar to the States/Union Territories are being made well in advance for distribution through the Public Distribution System. The lifting and distribution of the allocated levy sugar through the fair price shops is the responsibility of the respective State Governments/U.Ts. and their nominees.

(b) and (c) No decision for export has been taken. Adequate availability of sugar for domestic consumption will be ensured before allowing any commercial export of sugar during the current season.

Production of sugar in the country

7650. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of sugar in various States particularly in the State of Punjab during 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 State-wise; and

(b) per ton cost therefor during the said period, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to set up more new sugar mills in Punjab during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) The required information is at Statement—I.

(b) A statement showing the State-wise/pricing zone wise ex-factory prices of levy sugar, which is indicative of the cost of production based on the Statutory Minimum Price of sugarcane, is at Statement—II.

(c) During the current financial year 1995-96 AprilMarch), no letter of intent has been granted for the setting up of a new sugar mill in the State of Punjab. The Central Government does not set up sugar mills in any part of the country. However, it grants letters of intent to applicants keeping in view the licensing policy guidelines.